(d) As per NTP-1999 the targets regarding tele-density for the year 2005 is 7 and for the year 2010 is 15 per hundred persons.

(e) The Government has adopted the following strategy to achieve these targets :

1. Services have been opened for competition.
2. No. of Cellular operators have been increased from 2 to 4 in each circle.
3. New technologies like WLL (Code Division Multiplex Access, Cor-Digital Enhance Technology) and GSM (Global System of Mobile Communication) have been introduced for faster rollout.

Community Information centres in Tripura

2593. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of blocks in Tripura where Community Information Centres (CICs) have been set up;

(b) the number of blocks in the State where CIC projects are due to be set up; and

(c) the benefits derived/to be derived from these CICs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) and (b) Community Information Centres have been setup in 29 blocks in Tripura. As per the approved CIC Project, no expansion of the project was envisaged.

(c) The CICs are currently being used for disseminating various Citizen Centric Services such as Information on tourism, agricultural, educational and employment opportunities, results of boards/entrance/ professional exams, Election results, etc. through CIC portal (www.cic.nic.in), web-based Services, Health Education, Training, entertainment & news. Training to the local community on the fundamentals of using computers is being provided by CICs. Biomedical

Tele-consultation sessions are also being broadcast centrally and received by CICs. Services like Internet browsing, E-mail are being provided by all CICs.

Stpl at Agartala

2594. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a decision has been taken to setup Software Technology Parks at Agartala;

(b) whether it is also a fact that STPI and State Government of Tripura have already come to an understanding in respect of the said Parks; and

(c) the progress made in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A proposal for setting up STP Centre at Agartala has been approved. Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has already been sent to Government of Tripura for their concurrence.

Benefit to private operators

2595. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that private operators have been given undue benefit to the tune of Rs. 719 crore in relation with the Village Public Telephone System, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Department spent more than 90 crore rupees to provide VPTs on behalf of private operators; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.